



## Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

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Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

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**TO:** Audit Committee

**FROM:** Dean C. Logan, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

### **STATUS UPDATE: REPORT ON REVIEW OF ALLEGED DUPLICATE REGISTERED VOTER RECORDS (Board Agenda Item 70-A, November 5, 2014)**

This is to provide a status update on actions taken in response to the report and findings identified in the Auditor-Controller's review of alleged duplicate registered voter records (Board Agenda Item 70-A, November 5, 2014).

As noted in the Auditor-Controller's report and in our response, the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RRCC) is committed to and focused on minimizing the occurrence and effects of duplicate records and enhancing existing and future voter data maintenance protocols and activities. Consistent with that commitment, we have taken significant steps to address the recommendations outlined in the Auditor-Controller's Report.

Responsive to specific findings and recommendations in the Auditor-Controller's report, the RRCC thoroughly reviewed the lists of 442 and 52,000 potential pairs of duplicate voters, respectively, and the list of 1,900 registrants without a date of birth on file. The following summarizes our findings and the actions taken to date:

- Of the alleged 442 pairs, 21 pairs were confirmed not to be duplicates and records were updated in a manner to distinguish them as individual records; 404 pairs were confirmed to be duplicates and the records were merged; and 17 pairs were expunged completely based on ongoing file maintenance activity or new information obtained in the course of our review. Consistent with findings in our review, we confirmed no instance of an individual voting twice in one or more of the last three major elections.
- Of the 52,000 pairs, we randomly sampled 593 and found approximately 85% to be false positives, leaving only 15% of the sample as probable duplicates. The large number of false positives appears to be a consequence of the somewhat general criteria used by the Auditor-Controller; matching last name, first name and address without any other data points (i.e. date of birth, DMV number, etc.). Based on the sampling and affiliated analysis, the Department narrowed the list to roughly 8,200 pairs determined to have a high likelihood of being duplicates.

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- In response to the above, our data hygiene work unit is manually reviewing close to 8,600 pairs for confirmation and correction where required. To date, we have reviewed approximately 5,500 out of the 8,600 pairs (64%) and determined that 750 pairs are not duplicates and updated records in a manner to distinguish them as individual records; 4,338 pairs are confirmed duplicates resulting in records being merged and/or cancelled such that only one active record now appears on the voter file; and 525 pairs require additional research to resolve.
- Of the 1,900 registrants identified without a date of birth, we confirmed and updated the records for 1,685 registrants and cancelled 282 records using data matched to the State DMV file provided by the California Secretary of State.
- We ran additional queries for voter records without a date of birth from January 1, 1976 to February 28, 2015 and identified a total of 2,673 records. We updated 2,325 records and cancelled 348 using both State DMV records and direct contact with voters as confirmation. This query is now part of our routine voter file maintenance activity and is run on a bi-weekly basis.

Additional systemic and procedural actions taken to ensure information in the voter file is accurate and up-to-date include:

- Development and adoption of business rules for routine file maintenance;
- Formalized adoption of operational procedures and staff training for entering voter information;
- Designation and staffing of a specific unit dedicated to data hygiene activities, including identifying, reviewing and correcting data anomalies; and
- Employment of third-party data management services to develop routine queries to identify and automate the correction of file anomalies using comparison data from other sources (i.e. credit header address correction data, public death notices, etc.).

Finally, recognizing that an identifiable source of incomplete or inaccurate data can be linked back to registration applications received through community and commercial petition drives, we have scheduled an educational workshop for petition circulators and community organizations conducting petition or voter registration drives to ensure they are aware of the problems created when they submit registrations with erroneous information.

Debbie Martin, Chief Deputy Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, will attend the Audit Committee meeting on April 16th to highlight these actions, further report on our progress and respond to any inquiries committee members may have. Any questions in advance of the meeting may be addressed to me or you may contact Tim McNamara, Assistant Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk for Election Operations, at (562) 462-2722.

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